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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

Research and Analysis Branch

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ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF VOLKSDEUTSCHE OF MILITARY AGE IN EUROPE OUTSIDE THE 1939 BORDERS OF GERMANY

R & A No. 1238

25 September 1943

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ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF VOLKSDEUTSCHE OF MILITARY AGE IN EUROPE OUTSIDE THE 1939 BORDERS OF GERMANY

Summary

It is estimated that 442,000 Volksdeutsche (from the countries of Europe including Alsace-Lorraine) of military age are serving in the German armed forces. This represents the number of men who probably can be recruited for military service and is not subject to revision downward for unfitness or non-availability. Once this potential is exhausted the only further Volksdeutsche additions will be from age classes coming of military age, estimated to be 15,000 per year. This cannot be considered a net addition to the German armed forces inasmuch as this addition must be balanced against any outgoing Volksdeutsche age classes.

Since a large number of those included in the total were recruited for home duty, for security police and under duress, and because the German armed forces must seek to replace front line combat troops, the Volksdeutsche components of the armed forces are adequate in numbers only.

VOLKSDEUTSCHE ESTIMATED TO BE AVAILABLE

FOR THE GERMAN ARMED FORCES BY ORIGIN

	Origin (1)	Number Available (2)
1.	German nationals returned from abroad	25,000
2.	Volksdeutsche in the annexed territories . . . . (Danzig, Eupen-Malmedy, Lower Styria, South Carinthia, Carniola, West Prussia, Wartheland, Upper Silesia, districts of Zichenau, Suwalki and Bialystok)	175,000
3.	Volksdeutsche transferred to German territory. . from Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, South Tirol, Lublijana, Rumania, France, Bulgaria, Serbia, Polish and Russian territories	75,000
4.	Volksdeutsche in Alsace-Lorraine and Luxemburg .	27,000
5.	Volksdeutsche transferred from other armies to the German armed forces: Rumania and Slovakia	25,000
6.	Volksdeutsche from other areas . . . . . Protectorate, Hungary, Belgium and Netherlands	115,000
		442,000

The Volksdeutsche of Europe for the purpose of estimating their manpower contribution to the German armed forces, are (1) German nationals who resided outside the 1939 boundaries of Germany, and (2) persons of German extraction, tongue or sympathies who may or may not have identified themselves with Volksdeutsche communities in other countries outside the 1939 boundaries of the Reich.

The statistics of the first group are reasonably accurate, probably having been taken from the registries maintained in Germany of all nationals residing abroad. German nationals residing abroad are subject to the same conscription regulations as German residents and it therefore can be safely assumed that a high percentage of this group have been taken willingly into the German armed forces.

The statistics of the various elements comprising the second group of Volksdeutsche can be viewed speculatively. All the figures are estimates based on the pre-1939 hopes of Germany. They emanate from such skillful population propagandists as Winkler[1/] and Schnee[2/] As propaganda, such estimates would have

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1/ Winkler, Statistiches Handbuch für Das Gesamte Deutschtum, 1927.

2/ Schnee, Des Reiches Neue Nachbarn, 1939; and Deutschtum in Sud-Ost Europa, 1939.

everything to gain by overestimation. Having accepted such estimates and having estimated the number of military age and fitness, the influence of the general level of sympathy with Germany must be taken into account in estimating the numbers available for the German armed forces. The same size group in two different countries can yield considerably different results. This is in direct contrast to the yield from German nationals residing abroad, where it can be assumed that a high percentage of the total of military age and fitness are serving or will serve in the German armed forces.

German nationals outside the 1939 borders of Germany (25,000)

All German citizens residing outside Germany are required by law in time of war to register for military service with a German consulate and to return insofar as possible. Until the winter of 1942-43 little pressure was exerted upon those who had not yet returned. At the end of 1942 Germany began to conscript German nationals abroad by age classes (with the possible exception of diplomats) and to transport them back to the Reich. An estimated 25,000 Germans living in Switzerland, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Finland could have been obtained.

Volksdeutsche in the Annexed Territories (175,000)

The number of Volksdeutsche in the territories annexed by Germany since 1939 is shown as follows:

Danzig[1]	400,000
Eupen-Malmedy[2]	50,000
Lower Styria, South Carinthia, and Carniola[3]	50,000
West Prussia, Wartheland, Upper Silesia, Zichonau, Suwalki, and Bialystok[4]	650,000
	1,150,000

It can be assumed, using German age distribution as a parallel, that of this number 20 per cent are males of military age and after making reasonable allowances for unfitness and unavailability, approximately 175,000 would be available for the German armed forces. No doubt little resistance was shown to conscription in the unified German communities in these areas and the maximum number was probably obtained.

1/ Wirtschaft und Statistik, June 1940; Frankfurter Zeitung, 22 August 1942; Der Neue Brockhaus, 1938.

2/ Der Neue Brockhaus, 1938; Meyer's Lexikon, 1936.

3/ Der Neue Brockhaus, 1938; Goteborgs Handel-och Sjoefarts Tidningen, 19 November 1942.

4/ Wirtschaft und Statistik, June 1940; Polish Statistical Yearbook, 1939 - 1941.

Volksdeutsche transferred to German territory (75,000)

Between 1939 and 1942 large numbers of Volksdeutsche were settled within the boundaries of Germany, many in Wartheland and the Upper Polish Corridor. They came from the following regions:

Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania[1]	130,000
Lublijana	16,000
South Tirol[2]	238,000
Eastern Poland[3]	164,000
Rumania[4]	214,000
France[5]	6,000
Bulgaria[6]	500
Serbia[7]	1,000
	759,500

A check on the Volksdeutsche of military age in this population movement is found in Wirtschaft und Statistik, January 18, 1941, which shows by age group the number of Volksdeutsche from Esthonia, Latvia,

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1/ Wirtschaft und Statistik, January 18, 1941.

2/ MEW, P-64, #63; Der Neue Brockhaus, 1938.

3/ Wirtschaft und Statistik, January 18, 1941.

4/ MEW, P-64, #65.

5/ Review of Foreign Press, April 27, 1942.

6/ Review of Foreign Press, April 27, 1942.

7/ Review of Foreign Press, April 27, 1942.

Lithuania, Wolhynia, Galicia, Narev and the General Government who were repatriated to German territory. Among the approximately 300,000 repatriates in this group, approximately 35,000 were between the ages of 18 and 45. Therefore, of the total 750,000 repatriated, with allowance for unfit etc., about 75,000 of this group would be available for German armed forces.

Volksdeutsche in Alsace-Lorraine and Luxemburg (27,000)

German 1939 statistics claimed 1.4 million Volksdeutsche in Alsace-Lorraine. The normal yield for the German armed forces from an assumed normal population distribution of this size would be about 200,000. At various times the Germans attempted to tap this reservoir by making enlistment in the Waffen SS attractive. Conscription orders have been issued over a period of time for the classes of 1914-1925 inclusive. It is reported that 80 per cent of the Alsace-Lorrainers refused to sign up for the German army and were put into labor and prison camps in Alsace and in Germany. Further reports tell of numerous executions which were carried out for refusal to become part of the German army, and the implication is strong that such resistance was general during 1942. There is also evidence that the number of persons in Alsace-

Lorraine claimed by the Germans to have been Volksdeutsche was exaggerated and that it was found that a high percentage of the population had French for mother tongue.

It is likely that of the estimated 200,000 "Volksdeutsche" of military age and fitness in Alsace-Lorraine 25,000 were available for the German armed forces.

Out of 300,000 Luxemburgers, 75,000 are members of the Volksdeutsche community. 1,500 are serving in the German army.1/ This number was obtained after strong resistance from the population, the first manifestation of which was the general strike called in opposition to the drafting of Luxemburg youth into the German army.

Volksdeutsche in other armies transferred to the German armed forces (25,000)

Approximately 400,000 Volksdeutsche in Rumania remained after transfers of Volksdeutsche into Rumania from Bessarabia and Bukovina, and transfers of Volksdeutsche out of Rumania into German Wartheland.2/ All Volksdeutsche are exempt from Rumanian mobilization

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1/ Volkischer Beobachter, 8.3.42; Bern, pl. July 24, 1942.

2/ NYT, March 4, 1943.

laws and are permitted to enlist in the Waffen SS without loss of Rumanian citizenship. Although 25,000 are estimated to be SA members (non-army organization), only about 5,000 are SS members. 40,000 Volksdeutsche are serving on the Russian front in the Rumanian army.

Slovakia's Volksdeutsche population of 150,000 yielded approximately 20,000 men into the SS. The agreement for the transfer was reaffirmed in March, 1943, in a statement by General Catlos of the Slovak Army hailing the benefits for Volksdeutsche of membership in the German SS.

Volksdeutsche in other areas (115,000)

It is likely that Hungary's 500,000 Volksdeutsche[1/] contributed approximately 50,000 men of military age to the German armed forces. The 450,000 in the Protectorate of Bohemia Moravia[2/] probably yielded 45,000 men to Germany.

In Belgium, the classes of 1901 through 1924 who had not yet been mobilized were directed to appear in early 1943. Approximately 5,000 to 10,000 have been gotten from Belgium. Through the same measures in Netherlands perhaps 10,000 Volksdeutsche of military age have been obtained in spite of strong resistance to the drafts.

1/ Wirtschaft und Statistik, January 1, 1941.

2/ Schneefus, Des Reiches Neue Nachbarn, 1939, p. 516.

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